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Chapter 13

Firefighter Training and Qualifications

Introduction

National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) sanctioned firefighters are trained and qualified according to the NWCG and other standards, as outlined below.

Policy

Firefighters must meet standards identified in the NWCG publication *PMS 310-1 National Interagency Incident Management System Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide*. The 310-1 may be found at <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/docs/docs.htm>

- **FS** - See *FSH 5109.17* for additional requirements.

Certain firefighters must meet standards identified in the *Interagency Fire Program Management Qualifications Standards and Guide*. The *Interagency Fire Program Management Qualification Standards and Guide* may be found at <http://www.ifpm.nifc.gov>

Agency standards for training and qualifications may exceed the minimum standards established by National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG). Such additional standards will be approved by the Fire Directors, and implemented through the Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS). Standards which may exceed the minimum standards established by NWCG are identified in:

- **BLM** - *BLM Fire and Aviation Training Information Job Aid* which can be found at :
http://www.blm.gov/nifc/st/en/prog/fire/training/fire_training/publications/job_aid.html
- **FWS** - *The Fire Management Handbook*.
- **FS** - *The FSH 5109.17. AD hires sponsored by the Forest Service will meet FSH 5109.17 position qualification standards.*
- **NPS** - *L380 Fireline Leadership is recommended training for single resource bosses; L-381 Incident Leadership is recommended training for RXBI.*

Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS)

The Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS) is the fire qualifications and certification record keeping system. The Responder Master Record report provided by the IQCS meets the agency requirement for maintaining fire qualification records. The system is designed to provide managers at the local, state/regional, and national levels with detailed qualification, experience, and training information needed to certify employees in wildland fire positions. The IQCS is a tool to assist managers in certification decisions. However, it does not replace the manager's responsibility to validate

1 that Employees meet all requirements for position performance based on their
2 agency standards.

3
4 A hard copy file folder will be kept for each employee. The contents will
5 include, but are not limited to: training records for all agency required courses,
6 evaluations from assignments, position task book verification, yearly updated
7 IQCS forms, and the Responder Master Record (RPTC028) from IQCS. All
8 records will be stored and/or destroyed in accordance with agency policies.

- 9 • **BLM** - *These policies can be found at*
10 *[http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/info/regulations/combined_record_schedules.](http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/info/regulations/combined_record_schedules.html)*
11 *html*
- 12 • **NPS** - *IQCS Account Managers should have an IQCS Delegation of*
13 *Authority if they are serving as the Certifying Official. Delegation of*
14 *Authority can be found at: <http://iqcs.nwcg.gov/main/requestAccount.html>*

15 **Certification of Non-Agency Personnel**

16 Non-agency firefighters will be certified by state or local fire departments, or
17 private training providers approved by a Memorandum of Understanding
18 (MOU) through their local GACC. Agencies will not assist in the
19 administration, or sponsor the Work Capacity Test (WCT), as the certifying
20 agency.

21

22 **Incident Qualification Card**

23 The agency administrator (or delegate) is responsible for annual certification of
24 all agency and Administratively Determined (AD) personnel serving on wildfire,
25 prescribed fire, and all hazard incidents. This responsibility includes monitoring
26 medical status, fitness, training, performance, and ensuring the responder meets
27 all position performance requirements.

28

29 Training, medical screening, and successful completion of the appropriate WCT
30 must be properly accomplished. All Incident Qualification Cards issued to
31 agency employees, with the exception of Emergency Firefighter (EFF-paid or
32 temporary employees at the FFT2 level), will be printed using the IQCS.

33 Incident Qualification Cards issued to EFF or temporary employees at the FFT2
34 level may be printed at the local level without use of the IQCS.

35

36 Each agency will designate employees at the national, regional/state, and local
37 levels as Fire Qualifications Administrators, who ensure all incident experience,
38 incident training, and position Task Books for employees within the agency are
39 accurately recorded in the IQCS. All records must be updated annually or
40 modified as changes occur.

- 41 • **NPS** - *Certification for Area Command and Type 1 Command and General*
42 *Staff (C&GS) position task books will be done at the national office level;*
43 *Type 2 C&GS, and any position task books issued to park fire management*
44 *officers will be certified at the regional office level. All other position task*
45 *books may be certified at the local unit level.*

46

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- 1 • *NPS - Certification of NPS Personnel. These policies can be found in*
2 *RM18 Chapter 10*

3 4 **Incident Qualification Card Expiration Dates**

5 Incident Qualification Card positions requiring Work Capacity Tests (WCT) are
6 valid through the fitness expiration date listed on the card. Incident
7 Qualification Card positions that do not require WCT for issuance are valid for
8 12 months from the date the card was signed by a certifying official.

9 10 **Universal Training Requirements**

11 All personnel filling Incident Command System (ICS) positions on the fireline
12 must have completed:

- 13 • S-130 Firefighter Training
- 14 • S-190 Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior
- 15 • L-180 Human Factors on the Fireline
- 16 • I-100 Introduction to ICS
- 17 • *NPS - It is NPS policy that two or more assignments be accomplished after*
18 *completing a Position Task Book, and receiving certification, before an*
19 *individual begins movement to the next higher level. It is also NPS policy*
20 *to require two or more qualified assignments be accomplished in a position*
21 *before an individual may become a position performance evaluator. The*
22 *only exceptions to this policy are unit leader positions leading to Planning*
23 *Section Chief, Logistics Section Chief, or Finance Section Chief.*
24 *Subordinate unit leader positions require a minimum of one assignment*
25 *after the PTB completion and position certification.*
- 26 • *FS - Forest Service direction is found in FSH 5109.17.*

27 28 **Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training**

29 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training is required for all positions as
30 identified in the *Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide* (NWCG 310-1)
31 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training must include the following core
32 topics:

- 33 • **Avoiding Entrapments** - Use training and reference materials to study the
34 risk management process as identified in the Incident Response Pocket
35 Guide as appropriate to the participants, e.g., LCES, Standard Firefighting
36 Orders, Eighteen Watch Out Situations, Wildfire Decision Support System
37 (WFDSS) direction, Fire Management Plan priorities, etc.
- 38 • **Current Issues** - Review and discuss identified “hot topics” as found on the
39 current Wildland Fire Safety Training Annual Refresher (WFSTAR)
40 website. Review forecasts and assessments for the upcoming fire season and
41 discuss implications for firefighter safety.
- 42 • **Fire Shelter** - Review and discuss last resort survival including escape and
43 shelter deployment site selection. Conduct “hands-on” fire shelter
44 inspections. Practice shelter deployments in applicable crew/module
45 configurations.

- 1 • **Other Hazards and Safety Issues** - Choose additional hazard and safety
2 subjects, which may include SAFENET, current safety alerts, site/unit
3 specific safety issues and hazards.
4
- 5 These core topics must be sufficiently covered to ensure that personnel are
6 aware of safety concerns and procedures and can demonstrate proficiency in fire
7 shelter deployment. The minimum refresher training hour requirements for each
8 agency is identified below. Training time may be extended in order to
9 effectively complete this curriculum or to meet local training requirements.
10
- 11 The Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training course (RT-130) is not a self-
12 study course. Minimum requirements have been established for instructors for
13 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training. These requirements will ensure that
14 an appropriate level of expertise and knowledge is available to facilitate
15 refresher training exercises and discussions.
- 16 • Lead instructors must be a qualified single resource boss.
 - 17 • Unit instructors must be qualified firefighter type one (FFT1).
 - 18 • Adjunct instructors may be utilized to provide limited instruction in
19 specialized knowledge and skills at the discretion of the lead instructor.
20 They must be experienced, proficient and knowledgeable of current issues
21 in their field of expertise.
- 22
- 23 For additional information please refer to the current *NWCG Field Manager's*
24 *Course Guide* (PMS 901-1) at:
25 <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/training/fmcg.pdf>.
- 26 • **BLM** - 4 hours
 - 27 • **FWS** - No minimum hourly requirement; core topics as shown above will
28 be covered.
 - 29 • **NPS** - 8 hours
 - 30 • **FS** - No minimum time requirement. Content dictated by National Fire
31 Program Managers.
- 32
- 33 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training will have a 12-month currency.
34 Firefighters who receive initial fire training are not required to take Annual
35 Fireline Safety Refresher Training in the same calendar year. A web site,
36 <http://www.nifc.gov/wfstar/index.htm>, titled *Wildland Fire Safety Training*
37 *Annual Refresher (WFSTAR)* is available to assist in this training.
- 38 • **BLM** - The "Do What's Right" training is required annual training but is
39 not a prerequisite for issuance of an Incident Qualification Card.
- 40
- 41 Entrapment avoidance and deployment protocols are identified in the *Incident*
42 *Response Pocket Guide (IRPG)* (PMS No. 461/NFES No.1077). The guide
43 contains a specific "Risk Management Process" and "Last Resort Survival
44 Checklist".
45

1 Qualification and Certification Process

2 Each unit with fire management responsibilities will establish an Incident
3 Qualification Card qualification and certification process. In areas cooperating
4 with other federal, state, or local agencies, an interagency qualification and
5 certification committee should include representatives from each unit. These
6 qualification and certification committees provide management oversight and
7 review of the wildland and prescribed fire positions under their jurisdiction. The
8 committee also:

- 9 • Ensures that qualifications generated by IQCS or other agency systems for
10 employees are valid by reviewing the training and experience of each
11 employee.
- 12 • Determines whether each employee possesses the personal characteristics
13 necessary to perform the wildland and prescribed fire positions in a safe and
14 efficient manner.
- 15 • Makes recommendations to the appropriate agency administrator or
16 designee who is responsible for final certification signature.
- 17 • Develops interagency training needs and sponsors courses that can be
18 offered locally.
- 19 • Ensures training nominees meet minimum requirements for attending
20 courses.

21 Non-NWCG Agency Personnel Qualifications

22 Personnel from non-NWCG agencies meeting *NWCG 310-1* prerequisites, can
23 participate in and receive certificates for successful completion of agency taught
24 courses. Agency employees can complete the Task Blocks, Evaluation Record
25 and Verification/Certification sections of a cooperating organizations employee
26 Position Task Book. Agency employees will not initiate or complete the
27 Agency Certification sections of Position Task Book for non-agency employees.

28
29
30 Personnel from agencies that do not subscribe to the NWCG qualification
31 standards may be used on agency managed fires. Agency fire managers must
32 ensure these individuals are only assigned to duties commensurate with their
33 competencies, agency qualifications and equipment capabilities.

34 Non-NWCG Agency Personnel Use on Prescribed Fire

35 The NWCG 310-1 *Wildland Fire System Qualifications Guide* establishes the
36 minimum qualifications for personnel involved in prescribed fires on which
37 resources of more than one agency are utilized - unless local agreements specify
38 otherwise. This guide may be found at:
39 <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/docs/docs.htm>.

40 Physical Fitness**41 Physical Fitness and Conditioning**

42 Agency administrators are responsible for ensuring the overall physical fitness
43 of firefighters. Employees serving in wildland fire positions that require a

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1 fitness rating of arduous as a condition of employment are authorized one hour
2 of duty time each work day for physical fitness conditioning. Employees
3 serving in positions that require a fitness rating of moderate or light may be
4 authorized up to three hours per week.

5
6 Fitness conditioning periods may be identified and structured to include aerobic
7 and muscular exercises. Team sports are not authorized for fitness conditioning.
8 Chapters 7, 8, and 9 of *Fitness and Work Capacity, 2nd ed. (1997)* and the
9 FireFit Program (<http://www.nifc.gov/FireFit/index.htm>) provide excellent
10 guidance concerning training specifically for the pack test, aerobic fitness
11 programs, and muscular fitness training.

- 12 • *FS - Forest Service direction is found in FSH 5109.17. NFFE Partnership*
13 *bargaining unit employees may only be required to successfully complete*
14 *the WCT once per year.*
- 15 • *FWS - See the Fire Management Handbook for specific direction.*
- 16 • *NPS - For health and fitness purposes, those who are fire-qualified at less*
17 *than the Arduous fitness level are not required to meet the mandatory*
18 *fitness program requirements of DO-57 for wildland fire management.*
19 *They are strongly encouraged to participate in the voluntary fitness*
20 *program, and must still meet physical fitness/work capacity requirements as*
21 *outlined in Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide (310-1) for positions*
22 *with Moderate and Light fitness requirements.*

23 24 **Medical Examinations**

25 Agency administrators and supervisors are responsible for the occupational
26 health and safety of their employees performing wildland fire activities, and may
27 require employees to take a medical examination at any time.

28
29 Established medical qualification programs, as stated in 5 CFR 339, provide
30 consistent medical standards in order to safeguard the health of employees
31 whose work may subject them or others to significant health and safety risks due
32 to occupational or environmental exposure or demand.

33
34 Information on any medical records is considered confidential and must be kept
35 in the employee's medical file.

36 37 **Department of Interior Wildland Firefighter Medical Qualification** 38 **Standards Program (DOI/MSP)**

39 All permanent, career-seasonal, temporary, Student Career Experience Program
40 (SCEP) employees, and AD/EFF who participate in wildland fire activities
41 requiring a fitness level of arduous must participate in the IMSP at the
42 appropriate level (see Medical Examination Requirements appendix N) and
43 must be medically cleared prior to attempting the WCT. Additional information
44 regarding the DOI-MSP can be obtained at
45 http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/.

- 46 • *FS - Refer to current agency direction.*

1 Under the DOI-MSP the Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ) will only be
2 required for arduous duty AD/EFF hires less than 45 years of age. If the
3 AD/EFF answers “yes” to a HSQ question and is determined to be “agency
4 mission critical” (e.g. single resource boss) an annual exam may be requested
5 through the medical standards program. The HSQ is not required prior to taking
6 the WCT at the arduous level for all other employment categories (e.g.
7 permanent, seasonal/temporary, term).

8
9 Employees or applicants who fail to meet the Federal Interagency Wildland
10 Firefighter Medical Qualification Standards as a permanent, seasonal/temporary,
11 or term employee may not perform as an AD/EFF for arduous duty positions.

12
13 If a Department of the Interior (DOI) BLM, NPS, FWS, BIA, arduous duty
14 Wildland firefighter (WLFF) develops a change in medical status (injury or
15 illness) between yearly medical exams that prevents them from performing
16 arduous duty lasting longer than three consecutive weeks, the WLFF is required
17 to report this change to his/her supervisor who will then contact the DOI-MSP at
18 wlffcsr@blm.gov or call 888-286-2521. The DOI-MSP will consult with the
19 respective Agency Fire Safety Representative and could request that the
20 contracted medical provider ask for additional medical information from the
21 WLFF and reevaluate the WLFF clearance status.

- 22 • *NPS - The law enforcement medical exam for NPS rangers, who are*
23 *collateral duty wildland firefighters, will suffice for MSP clearance.*
- 24 • *NPS - Medical clearance must be entered into IQCS.*

25 26 **Agency Specific Medical Examinations**

27 This section applies only to those employees and AD/EFF who participate in
28 wildland fire activities requiring a fitness level of moderate or light.

29
30 The Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ) will be utilized as a means to identify
31 individuals who may be at risk in taking the Work Capacity Test (WCT) and
32 recommend a medical examination prior to taking the WCT.

33
34 If any “Yes” answer is indicated on the HSQ, a medical examination is required
35 prior to the employee taking the WCT. If there is a known pre-existing medical
36 condition that is already being monitored under medical care (e.g., high blood
37 pressure), a medical clearance statement will be provided by the physician in
38 lieu of a medical examination prior to taking WCT.

39
40 Medical examinations will be performed utilizing the U.S. Civil Service
41 Commission Certificate of Medical Examination Form, SF-78. Stress EKGs are
42 not required as part of the medical examination and will only be approved if
43 recommended and administered by the medical examining physician. Cost for
44 exams will be borne by the home unit. If medical findings during exam require
45 further evaluation, then the cost of any further evaluation or treatment is borne
46 by the employee/applicant.

1 The examining physician will submit the completed SF-78 (and applicable
2 supplements) to the employee's servicing human resources office, where it will
3 be reviewed and retained in the employee's medical file.

- 4 • *NPS - The law enforcement medical exam for NPS rangers, who are*
5 *collateral duty wildland firefighters, will suffice for MSP clearance.*

6 7 **Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ)**

8 Title 5 CFR Part 339 - Medical Qualification Determinations, which provides a
9 determination of an individual's fitness-for-duty, authorizes solicitation of this
10 information.

11
12 The approved OMB Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ) may be found at:
13 <http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/safety>

14
15 The information on the HSQ is considered confidential and once reviewed by
16 the test administrator to determine if the WCT can be administered, it must be
17 kept in the employee's medical file (EMF). This file may only be viewed by
18 Human Resource Management (HRM) or Safety personnel.

- 19 • *FS - See Work Capacity Test Implementation Guide, see website:*
20 *<http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/>.*

21 22 **Work Capacity Test (WCT) Administration**

23 The Work Capacity Test (WCT) is the official method of assessing wildland
24 firefighter fitness levels. General guidelines can be found in the "*Work*
25 *Capacity Tests for Wildland Firefighters, Test Administrator's Guide*" PMS
26 307, NFES 1109.

27
28 WCT Administrators must ensure that WCT participants have been medically
29 cleared, either through Wildland Firefighter Medical Qualification Standards or
30 agency specific medical examination.

31
32 WCTs are administered annually to all employees, including AD/EFF who will
33 be serving in wildland fire positions that require a fitness level. The currency for
34 the WCT is 12 months.

35
36 The WCT Record (see appendix M) captures information that is covered under
37 the Privacy Act and should be maintained in accordance with agency Freedom
38 of Information Act (FOIA) guidelines.

39
40 Administration of the WCT of non-federal firefighters is prohibited for liability
41 reasons. Potential emergency firefighters who would be hired under Emergency
42 Hire authority by the agency must be in AD pay status or sign an agency
43 specific volunteer services agreement prior to taking the WCT.
44

- 1 A Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) shall be developed and approved for each field
2 unit prior to administrating the WCT. See the sample JHA found in appendix U.
3 Administer the test using the JHA/RA as a briefing guide.
- 4 • **BLM** - *A risk assessment shall be developed and approved for each field*
5 *unit prior to administering the WCT. A RA for the WCT can be found at:*
6 *<http://web.blm.gov/internal/wo-700/wo740/tools/RAWorksheets/>*
7 *RAWorksheet_Library.html*
- 8
- 9 Field units need to prepare a medical response plan (such as ICS-206 form) and
10 evaluate options for immediate medical care and transport and identify closest
11 emergency medical services. A minimum of a qualified First
12 Responder/Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) must be on site during WCT
13 administration. Based upon your specific evaluation a higher level of
14 emergency medical qualifications on scene may be warranted e.g. EMT or
15 Paramedic.
- 16
- 17 Document using the WCT Record (see appendix M). This document must be
18 retained until the next testing. Units may also be requested to provide data from
19 these records to assist in the evaluation of the WCT process.
- 20
- 21 Personnel taking the WCT will only complete the level of testing (Pack, Field,
22 Walk) required by the highest fitness level identified for a position on their
23 Incident Qualification Card. To further clarify, employees shall not take the
24 WCT unless they have an Incident Qualification Card qualification that requires
25 it, and only at the fitness level required by that position as identified in the
26 NWCG 310-1 or agency specific guidance or policy.
- 27
- 28 Test results must also be entered in the IQCS annually to update the fitness level
29 and date that will appear on the Incident Qualification Card. Physical fitness
30 dates entered in IQCS will reflect the date the employee passed the fitness test.
- 31 • **FS** - *The Forest Service requires a minimum of a qualified Emergency*
32 *Medical Technician (EMT) must be on site during WCT administration.*
- 33

34 **WCT Retesting**

- 35 Those who do not pass the WCT will be provided another opportunity to retest.
36 Employees will have to wait at least 48 hours before retaking the WCT. If an
37 employee sustains an injury (verified by a licensed medical provider) during a
38 test, the test will not count as an attempt. Once an injured employee has been
39 released for full duty, the employee will be given time to prepare for the test (not
40 to exceed 4 weeks). The numbers of retesting opportunities that will be allowed
41 include:
- 42 • Three opportunities for permanent employees required to pass a test for
43 duties in the fire program.
 - 44 • One opportunity for temporary employees required to pass a test (a second
45 chance maybe provided at the discretion of fire management).

- 1 • *FS - The Forest Service also uses the WCT as the official method of*
 2 *assessing wildland firefighter fitness levels. The specific direction,*
 3 *Implementation Guide, Health Screen Questionnaire, and required*
 4 *processes can be found at the following web site: <http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/>.*

6 **WCT Categories**

7 The *NWCG Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide, 310-1* identifies fitness
 8 levels for specific positions. There are three fitness levels - Arduous, Moderate,
 9 and Light - which require an individual to demonstrate their ability to perform
 10 the fitness requirements of the position. Positions in the “no fitness level
 11 required” category are normally performed in a controlled environment, such as
 12 an incident base.

- 13 • *BLM/FWS - Law Enforcement physical fitness standard is accepted as*
 14 *equivalent to a “light” WCT work category.*

16 **Work Capacity Test Categories**

| WCT Category | Distance | Weight | Time |
|----------------------------|----------|--------|---------|
| Arduous Pack Test | 3 miles | 45 lb | 45 min. |
| Moderate Field Test | 2 miles | 25 lb | 30 min |
| Light Walk Test | 1 mile | None | 16 min |

- 17 • **Arduous** - Duties involve field work requiring physical performance with
 18 above average endurance and superior conditioning. These duties may
 19 include an occasional demand for extraordinarily strenuous activities in
 20 emergencies under adverse environmental conditions and over extended
 21 periods of time. Requirements include running, walking, climbing, jumping,
 22 twisting, bending, and lifting more than 50 pounds; the pace of the work
 23 typically is set by the emergency conditions.
- 24 • **Moderate** - Duties involve field work requiring complete control of all
 25 physical faculties and may include considerable walking over irregular
 26 ground, standing for long periods of time, lifting 25 to 50 pounds, climbing,
 27 bending, stooping, twisting, and reaching. Occasional demands may be
 28 required for moderately strenuous activities in emergencies over long
 29 periods of time. Individuals usually set their own work pace.
- 30 • **Light** - Duties mainly involve office type work with occasional field
 31 activity characterized by light physical exertion requiring basic good health.
 32 Activities may include climbing stairs, standing, operating a vehicle, and
 33 long hours of work, as well as some bending, stooping, or light lifting.
 34 Individuals can usually govern the extent and pace of their physical activity.

36 **Minimum Age Requirements for Hazardous Duty Assignments on Federal** 37 **Incidents**

38 Persons under 18 years old will not perform hazardous duties during wildland
 39 fire management operations on federal jurisdictions.

40

1 **Engine Modules**

2 Staffing levels and specific requirements for engine personnel may be found in
3 Chapter 14, Fire Fighting Equipment.

4

5 **Helicopter Modules**

6 Staffing levels and specific requirements for helicopter personnel may be found
7 in Chapter 16, Aviation.

8

9 **Smokejumpers (SMKJ)**

10 Smokejumpers provide professional and effective fire suppression, fuels
11 reduction, and fire management services to help land managers meet objectives.

12

13 **SMKJ Policy**

14 Smokejumper operations are guided by direction in the *Interagency*
15 *Smokejumper Operations Guide (ISMOG)*.

16

17 Each base will comply with smokejumper operations standards. The arduous
18 duties, specialized assignments, and operations in a variety of geographic areas
19 require smokejumpers to have uniform training, equipment, communications,
20 organization, and operating procedures.

21

22 **SMKJ Smokejumper Organization**

23 The operational unit for smokejumpers is “one load.” A load is typically 8-20
24 smokejumpers and varies as per aircraft type.

25

26 **SMKJ Coordination & Dispatch**

27 Smokejumpers are a national resource and are ordered according to geographic
28 area or national mobilization guides.

29

30 **SMKJ Communications**

31 All smokejumpers carry programmable radios and are proficient in their use and
32 programming procedures.

33

34 **SMKJ Transportation**

35 Smokejumper retrieval is accomplished by coordinating with the requesting
36 dispatch center. More detailed information can be found in the guides mentioned
37 above.

38

39 **SMKJ Safety**

40 All aviation and parachute operations will be accomplished in accordance with
41 standard operating procedures and regulations.

42

43 **SMKJ Training**

44 To ensure proficiency and safety, smokejumpers complete annual training that
45 covers aspects of aviation, parachuting, fire suppression tactics, administrative
46 procedures, and safety, related to the smokejumper mission and fire operations.

- 1 The training program for first-year smokejumpers is four weeks long.
- 2 Candidates are evaluated to determine:
 - 3 • Level of physical fitness
 - 4 • Ability to learn and perform smokejumper skills
 - 5 • Ability to work as a team member
 - 6 • Attitude
 - 7 • Ability to think clearly and remain productive in a stressful environment

9 **SMKJ Qualifications**

| Smokejumper Position | Target ICS Qualification |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Department Managers | T2 & T1 Command & General Staff, FUMA |
| Spotter | ICT3, DIVS ATGS, RXB2, SOFR |
| Lead Smokejumper | STLD, TFLD, FOBS |
| Smokejumper | ICT4, CRWB, FIRB |
| Rookie Smokejumper | ICT5, FFT1, FOBS |

10

11 **SMKJ Physical Fitness Standards**

12 The national minimum standards for smokejumpers are:

- 13 • 1.5 mile run in 11:00 minutes or less
- 14 • 45 sit-ups
- 15 • 25 pushups
- 16 • 7 pull-ups
- 17 • 110 lb. packout over 3 miles/level terrain/90 minutes
- 18 • Successful completion of the WCT at the arduous level.

19

20 **Interagency Hotshot Crews (IHC)**

21 Interagency Hotshot Crews provide an organized, mobile, and skilled hand crew
22 for all phases of wildfire suppression.

23

24 **IHC Policy**

25 IHC standards provide consistent planning, funding, organization, and
26 management of the agency IHCs. The sponsoring unit will ensure compliance
27 with the established standards. The arduous duties, specialized assignments, and
28 operations in a variety of geographic areas required of IHCs dictate that training,
29 equipment, communications, transportation, organization, and operating
30 procedures are consistent for all agency IHCs.

31

32 As per agency policy all IHCs will be managed under the *Standards for*
33 *Interagency Hotshot Crew Operations (SIHCO)*.

- 34 • **BLM/NPS - BLM Preparedness Review Checklist #12 (Hotshot Crew)**
35 *supersedes the checklist found in the SIHCO.*

36

1 IHC Certification

2 The process for IHC certification is found in the *Standards for Interagency*
3 *Hotshot Crews* (SIHCO), Chapter 5, page 14.

5 Annual Crew Pre-Mobilization Process

6 The superintendent of crews holding IHC status the previous season are required
7 to complete the Annual IHC Mobilization Checklist (SIHCO Appendix C) and
8 send the completed document to the local GACC prior to making the crew
9 available for assignment each season.

10

11 Annual IHC Readiness Review

12 On an annual basis the superintendent of crews holding IHC status the previous
13 season are required to complete the Annual IHC Preparedness Review (SIHCO
14 Appendix B). This process is designed to evaluate crew preparedness and
15 compliance with SIHCO. The annual review will be conducted while the crew
16 is fully staffed and operational. The review is not required prior to a crew being
17 made available for incident assignment at the beginning of their availability
18 period. When a review document is completed the document is kept on file at
19 the local host unit fire management office.

20

21 IHC Organization

22 Individual crew structure will be based on local needs using the following
23 standard positions: Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Squad Leader,
24 Skilled Firefighter, and Crewmember.

25

26 IHC Availability Periods

27 The Crew Superintendent is responsible to inform local supervisor and the local
28 GACC of any required changes in the crew's typing. IHCs will be available to
29 meet or exceed availability periods specified in the current *SIHCO*.

- 30 • *BLM - IHC crewmembers will receive 40 hours of basic or refresher*
31 *training before their first fire assignment in a fire season. Refresher training*
32 *will include, but is not limited to, crew safety, risk management, firefighter*
33 *safety, fire behavior, communications, and organization. The final*
34 *responsibility for crew availability will rest with the Superintendent's*
35 *certification to local unit management that all training is complete. The*
36 *minimum tour of availability excluding required training periods for BLM*
37 *IHCs will be 130 calendar days for crews in the lower 48 states and 90*
38 *calendar days for crews in Alaska.*
- 39 • *NPS/FS - IHCs follow the SIHCO, including minimum tours. In some*
40 *regions, tours may exceed the minimum based on preparedness and fuels*
41 *funding levels, or non-fire funding for these resources.*

42

43 IHC Communications

44 IHCs will provide a minimum of five programmable multi-channel radios per
45 crew as stated in the *SIHCO*.

46

1 IHC Transportation

2 Crews will be provided adequate transportation. The number of vehicles used to
3 transport a crew should not exceed five. All vehicles must adhere to the
4 certified maximum Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) limitations.

6 Other Hand Crews**8 Policy**

9 All crews must meet minimum crew standards as defined in appendix T as well
10 as any additional agency, state, or contractual requirements. Typing will be
11 identified at the local level with notification made to the local GACC.

13 Crew Types**14 • Agency Crews**

15 Agency hand crews consist of qualified agency personnel and are organized
16 on a local basis. These crews are designated as Type 2 or Type 2 IA.

17 • State Crews

18 State crews are organized under the auspices of individual states. These
19 crews may be designated as Type 1, Type 2, or Type 2 IA. These crews
20 include organized state inmate crews.

21 • Emergency Firefighter Crews (EFF)

22 These crews are usually Type 2 crews consisting of agency sponsored on
23 call personnel who meet the requirements for Type 2 IA or Type 2 as
24 defined in appendix T.

25 • Contract Crews

26 These organized crews consist of personnel trained, equipped, and certified
27 by a private contractor and must meet the contractual specifications as
28 stated in their state or national crew contracts.

29 • *FS - The FS endorses the National Minimum Standards for crews and
30 applies FSH 5109.17 for training requirements.*

32 Wildland Fire Modules

33 Information on fire use modules can be found at:

34 <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/pubs/pubs317/PMS-317.pdf>.

35 • *NPS - The National Park Service has Wildland Fire Modules. The primary
36 mission and priority of the modules is to provide skilled and mobile
37 personnel to assist with Wildland Fire Managed for Multiple Objectives in
38 the areas of planning, fire behavior monitoring, ignition, and holding.*

39 *Secondary priorities follow in the order below:*

- 40 ➤ Support burn unit preparation.
- 41 ➤ Assist with fire effect plot work.
- 42 ➤ Support mechanical hazardous fuel reduction projects.

43 • *NPS - As an interagency resource, the modules are available nationally
44 throughout the fire season. Each module is comprised of a module leader,
45 assistant leader and three to eight module members. Modules are mobilized
46 and demobilized through established ordering channels through the GACCs.*

1 Agency Certified Positions

2 As a supplement to the qualifications system, certain agencies have identified
3 the additional positions of Prescribed Fire Burn Boss 3 (RXB3) - see Chapter
4 17; Engine Operator (ENOP) - see Chapter 2; and Chainsaw Operators and
5 Fallers listed below.

- 6 • *FWS - See the Fire Management Handbook for agency specific position*
7 *information.*

9 Chainsaw Operators and Fallers

10 The agencies have established the following minimum qualification and
11 certification process for Chainsaw Operators (Incident Qualification Card
12 certified as Faller A):

- 13 • Agency employees who are chainsaw operators and fallers must be
14 minimally qualified as a FFT2 and meet the arduous fitness standards.
- 15 • Successful completion of S-212, including the field exercise, or those
16 portions of S-212 appropriate for Faller A duties.
- 17 • Agency administrator (or delegate) certification of qualifications after
18 verification that training is successfully completed.
- 19 • Documentation must be maintained for individuals.
- 20 • The individual tasks required for completion of the "A" Task Book and the
21 final evaluation for the "A" level saw operators must be verified or signed
22 by a qualified "B" or "C" level saw operator.
- 23 • The individual tasks required for completion of the "B" Task Book must be
24 evaluated by a qualified "B" or "C" level operator. The Final Evaluator
25 Verification for "B" level operators must be signed by a "C" level saw
26 operator.
- 27 • The individual tasks required for completion of the "C" Task Book must be
28 evaluated by a qualified "C" level operator. The Final Evaluator
29 Verification for "C" level operators must be signed by a state approved "C"
30 level certifier.
- 31 • Each of the states/regions will certify and maintain a list of their current "C"
32 class saw operators who they approve to be "C" class certifiers.
- 33 • The certification of "C" class certifiers will remain the responsibility of the
34 agency administrator or delegate.
- 35 • All fire related (Incident Qualification Carded) saw operation qualifications
36 are maintained through the IQCS system and will have a currency of five
37 years.
- 38 • *BLM/NPS/FWS - Position task book found at:*
39 *<http://www.fire.blm.gov/training/blmtrng/PDFs/Faller/PTBFallerABC.pdf>.*
- 40 • *FWS - See the Fire Management Handbook for additional direction.*
41 *Information regarding FWS required annual chainsaw refresher can be*
42 *found at: <https://fi.fws.gov/nclogon.html>. Requires logon.*
- 43 • *FS - FS direction can be found in FSH 5109.17 and FSH 6709.11.*
- 44 • *NPS - Exceptions to the above policy are:*

- 1 • *Size classes used in the Faller A, Faller B, and Faller C Position Task Book*
2 *are guidelines and are not the determining factor in the complexity of a tree*
3 *falling operation. The size classes are to be used as an evaluation tool*
4 *during trainee evaluation. Chainsaw operators are expected to conduct a*
5 *thorough size up of each individual tree and determine the extent of*
6 *qualification required to safely perform a felling operation.*
- 7 • *The individual tasks required for completion of the “B” Task Book and the*
8 *final evaluation for the Class “B” saw operations must be verified by a*
9 *qualified Class “B” or “C” saw operator.*
- 10 • *The individual tasks required for completion of the “C” Task Book and the*
11 *final evaluation for the Class “C” saw operations must be verified by a*
12 *qualified “C” level operator.*
- 13 • *Certification of “C” level operators must be completed by a regionally-*
14 *approved “C” level certifier.*